

**Date:** April 16, 2013, 10:58:14 PM PDT  
**To:** <[beth.reiley@state.or.us](mailto:beth.reiley@state.or.us)>  
**Subject:** **Opposition to Senate Bill 838!**

Dear Senate Committee

I went onto the Oregon State website today to check on the status of State Bills 838 and 401. It took a lot longer than it should to find out any information about it and finally I discovered that there is another hearing on Wednesday, April 17th. I have been saving up for the past three years so that I may go down to Oregon, making sure that my gear is in good working order, and preparing to spend a lot of time and money in your fine state. We have gotten to the point of being able to leave when we were alerted to these bills. These leave me heartbroken.

There have been many studies of how or if suction dredging is harmful to the environment. It actually assists the environment. It brings up food for the fish and wildlife to eat. We, as miners, also remove lead and mercury from the waterways that do injure fish and wildlife. We in Washington State, were presented an award for the amount of mercury and lead removed from our waterways from the Department of Fish and Game and the EPA . Removing any motorized equipment also eliminates anything but a pan and sluice for gold recovery. By rights, this should eliminate fishers from using motorized boats from your waters and people who mow their grass too close to the waterways.

I am unsure what the purpose of this bill is supposed to accomplish, whether it be environmental, financial, or any number of reasons. I am sure that you could come up with any number of arguments for your case but to those arguments I have a number against them and could come up with viable solutions to the issue at hand. Does stopping miners solve any overall issue? If the reason is environmental, I would be willing to bet that there are more boats with motors on the rivers and creeks of Oregon than miners. If the reason is financial, put in a tax or charge more for the permits.

These bills will cause more of a financial burden than what you may realize. There are many businesses that operate out of Oregon that will be put out of business, ie... Armadillo Mining Supply, D&K, White's Electronics, Inc., Waldo Mining District, and American Prospector, just to name a few. This is not to mention the other businesses that make money from us prospecting in Oregon. There are also 2,000 people, who do have permits, that supplement their income with gold prospecting. There are also physical advantages to mining, it keeps my son in shape and off the streets, and I am sure many other young people as well. It give me and my wife, both disabled veterans, something to do with our time and energy and to supplement our income. So please, at least look at a viable solution.

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